

VZCZCXR07092

PP RUEHBC RUEHDBU RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHIK RUEHKUK RUEHYG

DE RUEHBUL #5880 3510840

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 170840Z DEC 06

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4939

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE

RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE

RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3423

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC

RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC

RHMFIUHQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL

UNCLAS KABUL 005880

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA, SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CR, S/CT, SCA/PAB, EUR/RPM
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE

NSC FOR AHARRIMAN

OSD FOR KIMMITT

CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A, CG CJTF-76, AND POLAD

RELEASABLE TO NATO/ISAF/AUS/NZ

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR AF IR

SUBJECT: PRT/HERAT: IRAN INVITES PROVINCIAL COUNCIL TO
MASHAD

¶1. (U) Members of the Herat Provincial Council participated in an Iranian version of the USG's International Visitor (IV) program when they were invited by the Iranian Government to Mashad, the nearest major Iranian city to Afghanistan.

Officially, they were invited by the Islamic Council of the city and were shown economic sites in Mashad. They returned last week, after having learned more about Mashad's municipality and projects under the city's control. Several noteworthy agreements were concluded, such as the Iranian commitment to construct a Technical and Vocational Institute in Herat for local high school graduates. The Iranian government will provide lab equipment in seven departments at the university, including food-quality testing, saffron research, and plant research. Herat University will receive five exchange professors from Mashad University for master's degree programs. Mashad University will also provide several scholarship opportunities for Afghan students for one to two years.

¶2. (U) There will be a follow-up visit shortly by another delegation from Mashad to further explore avenues of collaboration, and representatives of Mashad university, as well as vocational and technical institutes, will come to Herat. In addition, the Iranians have pledged additional assistance for the Herat university library and have already donated substantially, including hundreds of high-quality English-language textbooks.

¶3. (U) Comment: The official visits by delegations from Herat and Mashad and the promises of support are not unusual.

Throughout history, these two cities have enjoyed close relations. Their proximity makes such exchanges relatively economical and easy to arrange. Large numbers of Afghans have settled in the Mashad area, including the families of prominent Herati residents. Family visits, as well as travel by Afghans seeking work or to purchase goods in this part of Iran are routine.

NEUMANN